

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with John M. Bird on October 15, 2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the claims:

Claims 1 and 3 have been amended as follows:

1. (currently amended): A pneumatic tire comprising a cylindrical crown portion, and a pair of sidewalls and a pair of bead portions, the sidewalls and the bead portions being continuous from both sides of the crown portion, in which a continuous decorative portion[[.]] and protruding portions are arranged on at least one of the sidewalls,

wherein the continuous decorative portion comprises includes serrations having a pattern of tops and bottoms which continue with each other, the tops of the serrations protruding higher than the bottoms of the serrations with respect to a direction of protruding from the sidewall on which the decorative portion is arranged, and the tops and bottoms of the serrations extend continuously along the length thereof from a first region to a second region, wherein the bottoms of the serrations in the first region are formed at a root groove line,

wherein the protruding portions protrude higher than the tops of the serrations with respect to the direction of protruding from the sidewall, the protruding portions including at least one of a character and a mark, and

wherein each protruding portion adjoins the serrations at [[to]] the second region of the serrations to provide serrated decorative portion at a joined portion that is provided around the protruding portion, wherein bottoms of the adjoined serrations in the second region at the joined portion are higher than the root groove line defined by the bottoms of the same adjoined serrations in the first region with respect to the direction of protruding from the sidewall.

3. (currently amended): A pneumatic tire comprising a cylindrical crown portion, and a pair of sidewalls and a pair of bead portions, the sidewalls and the bead portions being continuous from both sides of the crown portion, in which a continuous decorative portion and protruding portions are arranged on at least one of the sidewalls,

wherein the continuous decorative portion comprises includes serrations having a pattern of tops and bottoms which continue with each other, the tops of the serrations protruding higher than the bottoms of the serrations with respect to a direction of protruding from the sidewall on which the decorative portion is arranged, and the tops and bottoms of the serrations extend continuously along the length thereof from a first region to a second region, wherein the bottoms of the serrations in the first region are formed at a root groove line,

wherein the protruding portions protrude higher than the tops of the serrations with respect to the direction of protruding from the sidewall, and

wherein each protruding portion adjoins the serrations at [[to]] the second region of the serrations to provide serrated-decorative portion at a joined portion that is provided around the protruding portion, wherein bottoms of the adjoined serrations in the second region at the joined portion are higher than the root groove line defined by the bottoms of the same adjoined serrations in the first region with respect to the direction of protruding from the sidewall;

wherein a flat portion continuously extends between one of the protruding portions and another of the protruding portions, and the flat portion is higher than the root groove line with respect to the direction of protruding from the sidewall;

wherein each of the protruding portions forms a character, respectively, and the flat portion is formed between the characters.

Summary of above-noted October 15, 2009 Interview: Agreement was reached on the changes to claims 1 and 3 detailed above. These changes were proposed by the examiner as, upon further review, the examiner indicated that it did not appear that the 9/22/2009 amended language clearly defined over previously applied JP 10-67209 or references such as Attinello (US 5,645,660 of record; esp. fig. 8), which is equivalent to reference "1" (JP 09-011713) referred to in the English translation of the Japanese Office Action (included with the 9/22/2009 response). The proposed amendment was made to define the invention in a manner that more clearly defined over the closest prior

art, including JP '209 and Attinello et al. These changes were to clarify that the serrations extend from a first region to a second region along their length and adjoin the protruding portions at the second region to provide joined portions around the protruding portions whose bottoms are located higher than the root groove line defined by the bottoms of the same adjoined serrations in the first region to provide the described solution to the rigidity differences in the region of the protruding portions, this being supported by the disclosure read as a whole, especially when read with page 17, lines 21+ of the specification.

Reasons for Allowance

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The claims are allowable over the closest prior art for the reasons of record taken with the following additional comments. In particular, although it is known to provide serrations adjacent protruding marks with bottoms at different heights in a protruding direction (e.g. fig. 5 of JP 10-67209 or figs. 3A and/or 8 of Attinello et al. (US 5,645,660)), the closest prior art, whether taken singly or in combination, does not teach or render obvious a tire as claimed including serrations that extend from a first region to a second region along their length and adjoin the protruding portions at the second region to provide joined portions around the protruding portions whose bottoms are located higher than the root groove line defined by the bottoms of the same adjoined serrations in the first region.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably

accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Geoffrey L. Knable whose telephone number is 571-272-1220. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard Crispino can be reached on 571-272-1226. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Geoffrey L. Knable/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1791

G. Knable
October 16, 2009